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The London Musical Season.

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By HENRY C. LUNN.

The hopeful signs of the progress of music in England are by no means so numerous as sanguine enthusiasts would lead us to imagine; for if we separate the worshippers of Art from the worshippers of artists, we shall find that the former class is in a sad minority. A record of the past season, thrown into the conventional language of the usual *resumé*, would be merely a recapitulation of so many former seasons, that it might almost have been set up in type at the beginning of the year, with a few blanks left for the filling in of names and dates. Certainly, two Opera-houses have been opened, the old established Musical Societies have given the stipulated number of concerts, and all has been done that the fashionable world requires. But where shall we turn for the proof that the appreciation of the highest class of music is steadily on the increase? At the Opera the favorite singers in their favorite parts have been the real attraction, whilst "Medea," and "Fidelio," have been given just enough to make the classicalists long for more; and the two hitherto unknown Operas, "L'Oca del Cairo" and "Abu Hassan," have been played two or three times to comparatively empty houses. It is true that Wagner's Opera, "Der Fliegende Holländer," must be accepted as a welcome novelty; but neither Campana's "Esmeralda" nor Ambroise Thomas's "Mignon" are the works which would have been chosen by a management accustomed to cater for an audience of highly cultivated taste. In the popular Oratorios, operatic singers have filled concert-rooms to overflowing, whilst comparatively unknown sacred works have been left to struggle into notice on the principle, we presume, that love of art is a virtue which should be its own reward. With the exception of the really fine performance of Mendelssohn's "Antigone" by Mr. Henry Leslie's choir, and the single presentation of Beethoven's Mass in D—altered to suit the requirements of the Sacred Harmonic Society—the "Oratorio Concerts" alone have shown activity in the performance of any but the well-worn works which for years have represented the classical element; and although much interest has been excited amongst the music-loving few, by the revival at these concerts of two of the greatest compositions of the master minds in creative art, and the production of a new Sacred Cantata, by a modern composer, the many are almost unconscious that any unusual occurrence has disturbed the even flow of the London "Musical Season." Whether a steady perseverance in the good cause may eventually alter this state of things, it would be impossible to predict; but, meantime, let us not believe that the taste of musical England is rapidly improving, simply because it has so long been the fashion to say so. The fact we have stated is undeniable—no good, therefore, can be effected by refusing to believe it, and no harm can be done by boldly stating it.

At the Royal Italian Opera, the pertinacity with which Madlle. Sessi was put forward in so many parts already identified with artists actually in the establishment, must have appeared extraordinary to those who believe that the secret of operatic management should mainly consist in making the best of the material at command. That Madlle. Sessi has many excellent qualifications, both as a singer and an actress, cannot be questioned; but although the audience welcomed her in such parts as *Lucia* and *Maria*, in "La Figlia del Reggimento," it was scarcely to be ex-

pected that those who had witnessed the exquisite performance of Madlle. Nilsson as *Ophelia*, in Ambroise Thomas's "Hamlet," should have accepted a representative of this character, whose chief recommendations were a fixed resolution to overcome difficulties and a blissful unconsciousness of failure. Had Madlle. Sessi understood the limit of her own powers or placed herself under the guidance of her real friends, she would have maintained a much higher position during the season; for in many parts which did not demand more than carefully cultivated vocal execution and ordinary knowledge of the stage, she was received, as she deserved, with the utmost amount of favor. Madlle. Cari, who made her *début* as *Maffeo Orsini*, in "Lucrezia Borgia," gave us but little opportunity to judge of her powers, for after this one performance, she joined the company of the rival establishment at Drury Lane. Of Madlle. Olma, who appeared in the small part of *Papagena*, in "Il Flauto Magico," we can speak most favorably; and Madlle. Madigan, in some very important secondary characters during the season, proved herself a reliable member of the company. Madlle. Titiens still reigns without a rival in those parts with which the public is now accustomed to associate her name, wisely abstaining from courting mere versatility at the expense of her high reputation. This season, however, she has added another character to her already extensive *répertoire*, that of the Queen, in Ambroise Thomas's "Hamlet," the whole of the music of which she sings with a dramatic power, showing how thoroughly the heart of a true artist is always in her work. Madame Adelina Patti was so effective as *Esmeralda*, in Campana's feeble Opera of that name, that we are almost inclined to fear that it was at her desire the work was produced. If so, this affords one more instance of the manner in which the destinies of the operatic world are ruled by vocalists, a fact which should in justice be put forward when the apparently eccentric actions of lessees have to be canvassed. Madame Pauline Lucca's singing remains as unfinished as ever; but her pleasing person and winning manner satisfy the many; and the characters which most require these latter qualities are therefore those which she should adhere to: certainly *Angela*, in Auber's "Le Domino noir," will scarcely add to her reputation. Madame Vanzini and Madlle. Scalchi have, as before, proved of much service during the season; and amongst those who have ably supported subordinate parts, we must mention Mesdelles. Bauermeister and Locatelli. The tenor department has been, as usual, unsatisfactory. Herr Wachtel, whose high chest notes and prodigious physical power have deceived many persons into the notion that he was a fine singer, departed suddenly, having previously written an explanatory letter to the papers which nobody cared about; Signor Mario has again exhibited to us how very gradual is the decay of a voice which has been properly trained; Dr. Gunz has sung well some purely German parts; Signor Vizzani, a new comer, has displayed a fairly good voice and style; and Signor Marino as *Corentino*, in Meyerbeer's "Dinorah," was highly effective; but, with the exception of Signor Naudin, always a reliable and conscientious artist, the company is as far off as ever from possessing a tenor upon whom the subscribers and the public can depend with confidence. Signor Cotogni has materially advanced his reputation by his performance of *Hamlet*, in Ambroise Thomas's Opera; and Graziari, if he had not added to, has, at least, supported his previous position. Signori Ciampi, Bagagiolo, Tagliafico, Capponi, M. Petit, &c., have been of infinite value in strengthening the

cast of several well-known works; and Signor Caravoglia, a new Bass, has also been deservedly well received. The catalogue of unfulfilled promises is not this year large; but we regret that Verdi's "Macbeth" was not given; for although not passionately attached to the music of this composer, we can imagine that the *Lady Macbeth* of Madlle. Titiens must be one of the finest performances on the lyric stage. The two conductors, Signori Vianesi and Bevilacqua, have done their best to support a bad system, no amount of exertion, even with more experienced directors, having the slightest chance of a really successful result where the *bâton* is constantly changing hands. Whether this method will be persevered in next season, we cannot say; for it now seems certain that Mr. Gye is to reign supreme over the fortunes of the Royal Italian Opera, and that Mr. Mapleson is to become lessee of Her Majesty's Theatre.

At Drury Lane Mr. Wood assembled an excellent company; and had he not relied too exclusively upon the attraction of Madlle. Nilsson, he would no doubt have had a more successful season. The subscribers and the public, however, were taught to expect the great Swedish vocalist on most of the principal evenings; and the consequence was that when she became too ill to appear, although several well-tried works, with well-tried singers, were given, the house was comparatively empty. It is unnecessary to record the successes of Madlle. Nilsson in all her well-known parts; but we may say that her exquisite singing as *Alice*, in "Roberto il Diavolo," *Desdemona*, in "Otello," and *Mignon*, in Ambroise Thomas's Opera, has materially raised her in public estimation. Madlle. Ilma di Murska has always been accepted as an efficient and reliable artist; but we were perfectly unprepared for so excellent—we might indeed say absolutely perfect—a performance, both vocally and histrionically, as that of *Senta*, in Wagner's "Der Fliegende Holländer." To execute the music of this part was no easy task for the most accomplished vocalist; but so thoroughly to realize the conception of a composer who places as much reliance upon the actor as upon the singer, and whose every musical phrase is instinct with the accompanying dramatic action, proves beyond doubt the possession of a creative power which almost amounts to genius. Madame Volpini has done much during the season to advance herself in public favor, especially by her brilliant vocalization as *Filina*, in Ambroise Thomas's "Mignon." We expected more from Madame Monbelli, considering the effect she invariably created in the concert-room. It is still possible, however, that practise on the stage may enable her to take that place in an operatic company for which her voice and style eminently fit her. Every endeavor was made to place Madlle. Reboux in the first rank during the season; but although undoubtedly an experienced singer, the unfortunate tremulousness of her voice—which she evidently rather encouraged than repressed—prevented the possibility of her retaining the post of *prima donna*, even during the temporary indisposition of Madlle. Nilsson. Of Madlle. Lewitzky, we have still great hopes; for although her excellent singing as *Isabella*, in Mozart's "L'Oca del Cairo," excited expectations which were not realized in her *Zerlina*, she is so young, and appears to possess so much intelligence, that we confidently look forward to her successful re-appearance at some future time. No regret was felt at the disappearance of Madame Barbot, after her single performance of *Valentine*, in the "Huguenots," but Madlle. Savertal, who was announced in the prospectus, and of whom we

have heard favorable report, would probably have been a welcome addition to the company; and, at least, her appearance would have absolved the lessee from the charge of not fulfilling one of the important promises in his opening programme. Madlle. Cari (who, from some unexplained cause, came over from the rival establishment) displayed a good contralto voice, and discharged the small duties allotted to her with infinite credit. Of so consummate an artist as Madame Trebelli-Bettini, we could say nothing but what we have so often written in her praise. Signor Mongini's fine voice gave strength, if not refinement, to the tenor department during a large portion of the season; and Signor Bettini, one of the most painstaking and conscientious members of the company, and Signor Gardoni, an old favorite, also lent most efficient aid to the general success of the season. Despite a certain hardness in the voice of Signor Perotti (the new tenor), there is much to admire in his singing; his execution of the trying music of *Erik*, in Wagner's Opera, being in many respects highly commendable. Signor Rinaldini, too, another new comer, made a highly favorable impression, as did also Signor Archinti in the little he had to do. Considering the claims of M. Faure to a prominent place throughout the season, it appears extraordinary how rarely he was heard. Why, for instance, was not "Don Giovanni" re-cast, instead of allowing his fine performance of the "Don" to be limited to one night because certain persons failed in some of the other characters? It is true that his *Lotario*, in Ambroise Thomas's "Mignon," displayed his talent to the best advantage, but this work was played but seldom; and how many Operas could we name in which his co-operation would have proved a tower of strength! We would pass over the name of Mr. Santley with the usual recognition of the invaluable nature of his services, were we not compelled to record our unqualified admiration of his performance of the *Holländer*, in Wagner's Opera, a performance which not only stamped him as unquestionably the greatest baritone of the day; but proved beyond doubt that he had so earnestly studied the character as to invest it with that mysterious and supernatural coloring without which it would have merely taken its place as the conventional bass of the operatic stage. So intellectual a personation of a really difficult part is too rare to be dismissed without a special mark of recognition. Signori Verger and Raguer, considering the powerful basses and baritones already in the company, created a favorable impression, and probably may be made of more use next season. Signori Gassier, Foli, Castelli, Mr. Lyall, &c., may be briefly dismissed as too well known and efficient artists to need separate comment. So many of the Operas promised in the prospectus have been so faithfully produced, that we care only to mention one which was not — Cherubini's "Les deux Journées" — a work which we have long waited to hear in its perfect form; and, (considering that Mr. Santley was ready for the part of *Michel*, the water-carrier), one admirably adapted for the company. Let us hope that so welcome a revival is only delayed for one season. Meanwhile, we must thank the management for such revivals as Mozart's "L'Oca del Cairo," and Weber's "Abu Hassan;" and above all, for bravely venturing an Opera by that much abused, and much abusing composer, Wagner, whose unmeasured defiance of the critics, although no evidence of the possession of genius, is by no means a proof of his want of it. With a line of unqualified praise for the admirable manner in which Signor Arditi has conducted during the whole of the season, we must conclude our notice of Mr. Wood's first operatic campaign.

The concerts of the Philharmonic Society have thoroughly maintained their character in the instrumental department; but to ensure the appearance of a higher class of vocalists, we cannot help thinking that some definite arrangements should be made at the commencement of the season, so that names of eminence may be announced in the prospectus. There may be every disposition to engage well-known singers at

each concert, but they are not to be procured at a few days' notice; and as second or third rate artists are constantly pressing for a hearing, there may be great danger of a still greater deterioration in the vocal department of the programmes, unless some such system as we have mentioned be adopted. Meanwhile, let us heartily praise the Directors for giving so excellent a final concert "in honor of Beethoven." Certainly, no Society had more right to represent the feeling of England on this occasion; for, apart from having been the means of introducing many of Beethoven's works to this country, it has immortalized itself by voluntarily giving substantial aid to the great composer in the hour of sickness and need.

The "New Philharmonic" Concerts, and the "Monday Popular" Concerts call for no particular notice, save a line of commendation on the efficient manner in which they have been conducted; and we may also say that the "Sacred Harmonic Society," by the production of Handel's much-neglected Oratorio, "Deborah," and the performance of a mutilated version of Beethoven's Mass in D, has at least shown a desire to introduce some novelty into their programmes.

Mr. Henry Leslie has given some very excellent concerts during the season, in which his choir has been the principal attraction — the performance of Mendelssohn's music to "Antigone," especially, being a success not easily forgotten — but we may also say that he has taken the field as a concert-giver on a more extensive scale, the principal singers from the Opera being engaged, and the fashionable, rather than the musical, portion of the London public being appealed to with a programme of Italian music, reminding us of the olden days of "Benefit Concerts." Oratorios, in which the principal parts have been sustained by Operatic vocalists, have also been given under Mr. Leslie's direction, which have attracted large audiences.

As we have already said, the two great works revived at the "Oratorio Concerts," have been really the most noteworthy events of the season. Beethoven's Grand Mass in D, and Bach's "Passion Music" have been shown to be not only perfectly intelligible to the performers, but equally intelligible to the listeners; and as we are certain that increased familiarity with these compositions will but deepen the impression which they have already made, we look forward with the utmost interest to their repetition. We must also mention the production of the Sacred Cantata, "Rebekah," written especially for these concerts by the conductor, Mr. Joseph Barnby, the success of which was so decisive, that it was selected for performance at the Hereford Festival. Whilst reviewing the series of "Oratorio Concerts" during the past season, it must in justice be said that the choir has made very decided progress both in quality of tone, and decision of attack; and when we consider that, in spite of the short time necessarily allowed for rehearsals, every promise in the prospectus has been rigidly redeemed, it may be readily imagined that a heart must have been thrown into the practice which materially lightens the labor of a conductor.

At the Crystal Palace, good instrumental works, well performed, have, as usual, ensured thoroughly appreciative audiences; and although perhaps the programmes have shown an undue leaning towards the modern German school, it is, no doubt, desirable that at least we should have a Musical Institution where novelty is admitted. We cannot forget what this establishment has done towards placing the name of Schubert amongst the great composers of the world; and provided we are not told in the books of words what we are to think of untried writers, we shall always be glad to hear what they have to say. When the choir, which certainly shows some signs of improvement, shall have been placed in as high a state of efficiency as the band, we shall hope to hear many great works which are too rarely presented in our concert-rooms in the metropolis.

The abolition of an orchestra in theatres exclu-

sively devoted to the performance of the drama, sometime ago strenuously advocated in this journal, appears likely to be acted upon. At the Prince of Wales's Theatre, where all the latest refinements of stage arrangement are so effectively carried out, as a preliminary, we presume, to not hearing the instrumental performers, we have, during the last season, not been permitted to see them; and the bill of Mr. Hare's benefit, at the Princess's Theatre, announces that "there will be no orchestra," two musical friends having offered their services on the occasion. We know that "stage music" is often lugged in to heighten the effect of a "Sensation drama;" but if the abolition of the first should necessitate the abolition of the second, we need scarcely say that we shall be additionally grateful. As for the indifferent playing before and between the pieces, surely no intelligent member of an audience could desire the continuance of such a custom. A well-known Overture, effectually displaying the incapacity of the orchestra, can scarcely prepare the listeners for an elegant comedy; and when the curtain falls, the short interval for conversation or refreshment can hardly be enlivened by scraps from classical symphonies, or a common-place set of quadrilles.

In a record of the musical events of the year the honor voluntarily conferred upon Professor Sterndale Bennett by the University of Oxford, cannot be lightly passed over. So much has been said about musicians banding themselves together to raise the "status" of the English Professor, that we are glad when our theory can be practically proved that the "status" of a Professor depends entirely upon himself. Not only by his works, but by his unceasing devotion to the healthy progress of music in this country — involving sacrifices which only those intimately acquainted with him can ever know — has Professor Bennett worthily earned a distinction which, although in fact a recognition of the artist, is in effect a recognition of the art. Music in England is advancing but slowly to its true position; and as much can be done by its followers to urge its real claims upon the nation, we should be doubly thankful to those who, gifted by nature with a great power, devote that power to the highest and noblest purpose.

Beethoven, Goethe, and Michael Angelo.*

I recollect once seeing in the Pitti Palace at Florence a picture by Rubens, a magnificent, first-class painting: an "Allegory of War." Enflamed with rage, Mars is rushing out through the gates, flung wide apart, of the Temple of Janus; a wild Fury, waving a torch, is dragging him forward; Harpies are fluttering before him, and Europe (represented as Cybele with the mural crown) follows wringing her hands. It is in vain that the Goddess of Love, with flattering embraces, endeavors to hold him back. In his furious career, as God of War, he has thrown over several male figures, with the emblems of art and science in their hands, among them being a man with a lute. In the background there are all kinds of desolation and wretchedness. It is evident that Rubens painted the picture under the impression of the Thirty Years' War, then ravaging Germany with fire and sword. Late events brought this painting to my mind, and I thought to myself that the Beethoven Festival Committee, at Bonn, might very well borrow it from the Italian Government, and hang it up as a public excuse before the Festival Hall (just as theatrical managers in Germany have red bills posted at the street corners, when there is any sudden and unexpected change of performance); the man thrown down with the lute, and Mars rushing past him would render any further explanation superfluous. But war and the tumult of war shall not prevent us from reminding our readers that in December a century will have elapsed since one of the greatest German masters of the art of music was born — the master whom we are fond of naming with Mozart, just as we are fond of saying "Raphael and Michael Angelo," or "Schiller and Goethe," when we would allude, by two names, to the highest efforts in other branches of art. If, however, matters progress as they are now progressing at the seat of war, we may yet be able to leave Rubens's picture in Florence, and perform the Ninth Symphony with the

*From the *Neue Berliner Musikzeitung*.

"To Deum" for victory and peace. God grant it may be so!

Of the bearers of the brilliant names I have just mentioned, the two great German poets, and the two great German composers, were contemporaries. Mozart and Schiller died at an early age, but fate permitted Beethoven to behold the countenance of his great predecessor, Mozart, who is said to have made on the occasion, the oft repeated remark: "Take care of him there; some day he, too, will have something to say." Goethe survived them all. He was, moreover, brought into personal communication with Beethoven, but, with regard to Mozart, we should scarcely be aware whether he ever knew of the existence of Schiller or Goethe, if he had not set to music Goethe's "Veilchen;" Heaven knows in what chance walk of his he found the lovely modest little flower, whose aromatic perfume delights us even at the present day. *Don Carlos* and *Don Juan* both belong to the same year (1787)—but could Mozart, in his Vienna, know aught about the former? It was not till a long time afterwards, when Mozart had long been in the realms of eternal harmonies, that the Vienna censure at length admitted Schiller's tragic muse into the imperial hereditary dominions. This appears rather strange to us, who have been nourished on Schiller's dramas, as on a soft of intellectual mother's milk; but let the reader put himself mentally in the place of a Vienna Censor of the Year One, and answer the question whether, when the worthy individual in question perused the *Räuber*, *Kabale und Liebe*, *Fiesco*, *Don Carlos*, *Wallenstein*, and *Tell*, his hair must not have stood on end, even supposing him to have worn a wig. When people spoke in Vienna at that period of German literature, they meant Klopstock and Wieland, who, like Alpha and Omega, like the two opposite poles, represented the "Elevated" and the "Graceful." That so joyous a mortal as Mozart should not be particularly impressed by Klopstock's elevated bombast is something very intelligible, and he made a most furious resistance when called upon to set to music the ode, "Calpe, dir donnert's am Fuss," by a Viennese local Klopstock—Denis or Sined. The words were beautiful, anything you liked, but as for being fitted for music, such a thing was totally out of the question, he said. He was as little pleased with the pretty frivolities of Wieland; the latter, reversing the course pursued by the French who at the time possessed a French *à la Grecque*, had given the world Greek *à la Française*. Mozart was just as little edified by Wieland personally, as we learn from his Mannheim Letters.

Beethoven at first allowed himself to be talked into an admiration for Klopstock. What people in Vienna then thought of Klopstock is very amusingly shown by a picture of Abel's, to be found (if I am not mistaken) in the "new school" of the Belvidere, a copy by the artist himself being in the Picture Gallery at Prague: "Klopstock is introduced by Siona, clad in Vestal-like costume, and bearing in her hand a palm branch half a fathom long. He is welcomed by a group of Greek poets, with Homer at their head. "I regret," Homer appears to be saying, "that I am acquainted with your admirable *Messias* only through the medium of a translation, as I do not understand German." Dante stands some distance off, under laurel bushes, but he is perfectly penetrated with a sentiment of his own nothingness, and feels ashamed of his *Divina Commedia*, which must certainly have struck the wits of the Year One as a piece of barbarism. Near at hand sits Petrarch with his Laura.—The whole resembles a parody on Raphael's Parnassus, from which, indeed, the one Muse has been rather unceremoniously taken.

Beethoven, as he afterwards told Rochlitz, when the latter called upon him, was incessantly reading Klopstock's Odes. Who knows that he was not first excited to the Pastoral Symphony by the "Frühlingsfeier," which is really powerful and moving? When he became acquainted with Goethe's poems, he spoke no more about Klopstock. "He always began in D flat major—always from upwards downwards." What he thought of Schiller is proved by words with which, according to his first plan, he meant to introduce the final movement of the Ninth Symphony. "Let us sing the song of the immortal Schiller: 'Freude, schöne Götterfunken!'"

But Goethe probably was more highly prized by him. The highest and crowning task of his life struck him as being the composition of music to *Faust*; he wanted with this to conclude his artistic labors. His chorus, "Meeresstille und glückliche Fahrt," was dedicated by him to the author. Though this composition cannot, perhaps, be called one of his best, his melodies to some of Goethe's lyrical poems are so much the more magnificent: "Kennst du das Land?"—"Herz, mein Herz, was soll das geben?"—"Trocknet nicht, Thränen der ewigen Liebe"—"Was zieht mir das Herz so?"—no man ever

composed finer songs, not even Franz Schubert. The words and the tune are so blended that it is impossible to imagine them apart; it seems to us as though something is wanting if we accidentally come upon the verses alone when turning over an edition of Goethe's works. And, lastly, the music to *Egmont*! Kayser of Zurich (Goethe's composer-in-ordinary before Zelter came) composed, in Rome, where the poet had sent for him, some music for *Egmont*, which was just completed. In one of his letters, Goethe praises it as "very appropriate." This may have been the case, for we must confess that Beethoven's music to *Egmont* is "very inappropriate;" it appears to subordinate itself so modestly to the poetry; it appears to give in a mere sketchy form the situations that are musically rendered (let the reader compare with this Meyerbeer's intrusive show-music to his brother's *Struensee*); and yet—yet—with all respect for *Egmont* and the great poet, we must say that the music outshines the drama; the frame is, in this instance, finer than the picture, fine though the latter be.

Goethe appears to have been as deaf to all these beauties, intellectually, as the composer was physically. He made Beethoven's acquaintance at Teplitz, but appears to have been inwardly little impressed by Beethoven's intellectual grandeur. We may say: without even having a suspicion of Beethoven's greatness, he beheld in the composer scarcely aught else than a man with whom it was difficult to keep up a communication, in consequence of his deafness, and who, from his bristling roughness and melancholy pining, was but slightly sympathetic. To Bettina's enthusiastic epistle Goethe answered, "cool to his inmost heart;"—with a gracious nod, and half depreciatingly he admits, "Beethoven's talent, which will show him the right way." When young Mendelssohn played him the first piece of the C minor Symphony upon the piano, the old gentleman evidently did not feel at all comfortable. "That is music which would cause the roof to fall in if performed by the whole orchestra at once," he muttered.

Though taking the purest and deepest interest in plastic art and in music, nay, more, though perfectly capable of appreciating both most thoroughly, Goethe unfortunately had as advisers by his side medio critics like Heinrich Meyer and Zelter. To what a degree his immeasurably larger mind believably submitted to the guidance is strikingly proved, for instance, by his allowing Zelter graciously to accord him Sebastian Bach's music. He would certainly have been able to comprehend Beethoven's music ten times better! The "Sonate Pathétique" was, at any rate, something which could penetrate ten times more confidentially to his heart than the Chromatic Fantasia. After Goethe had become acquainted in Upper Italy with Palladio, and in Venice with all sorts of specimens of the Antique, he solemnly renounced the Gothic principle, and himself threw down the monument that he had erected, "dis manibus Ervini a Steinbach." But the Gothic, or rather that Christian, and, at the same time, profoundly and significantly mysterious principle of art, organically constructing to the sharpest sense the principle which created the "frozen music" of the Gothic style of architecture, melted and was dissolved in the "thawed architecture" of Bach's Preludes, Toccatas, Fugues, and Fantasias, while the "haathen" Goethe knelt believably before these revelations, or rather, "he went to bed, and let the organist, von Berks, play him Sebastian." Zelter praised this highly: "So he is; he must be overheard, as it were, by an eavesdropper!" According to this rule, when "Sebastian" are for the future announced in the programme, the public will do well to run directly out of the room and listen at the key-hole, not to hear (according to the proverb) their own shame, but Sebastian's glory.

In the correspondence between Goethe and Zelter frequent mention is made of Beethoven. Zelter speaks of him in pretty much the same way that a blind man, hearing a peal of bells, would calculate the height of the steeple in which they hang. On one occasion, he even says: "We might, perhaps, compare Beethoven, at a distance, to Michael Angelo." That was a great thing to say to Goethe. For Goethe wrote from Rome after seeing the frescoes of the Sixtine Chapel: "I am at this moment so captivated by Michael Angelo, that not even Nature pleases me after him, for I cannot see with such great great eyes as he does. (Parenthetically remarked, it is a strange fact that Goethe never says a syllable anywhere of the Moses or Medici Digger, &c., &c.) Zelter hazarded the comparison, but only timidly; he places Beethoven at his proper "distance," that is, considerably under the great Florentine. We, having clearly before our eyes all Beethoven did, and knowing all his importance, shall not think Michael Angelo's truly Titanic mind less, but we consider what he created as analogous to only one side of

Beethoven's labors. When parallels have been drawn between Mozart and Raphael—Rochlitz began it, and was followed by von Hentel, Ulrici, and Alberti—there is a great temptation to play the Plutarch between Michael Angelo and Beethoven, and placing them back to back, as we sometimes place Jack and Gill, to see which is the taller of the two. Such comparisons are, in reality, not worth much, they are games of wit rather than aught else, with which superficiality pays itself court. For instance, Rochlitz, who had certainly seen nothing of Raphael beyond the Dresden Madonna, could not possibly possess a correct standard by which to judge the master. When, therefore, we see such points adduced as: each died young; each left his last and most highly prized work unfinished, and it had to be completed by the hands of novices, &c., &c., such silly nonsense having nothing to do with the essential attributes of the masters—we look about to see whether we are not also informed that: "Both were exceedingly fond of such and such a dish." With regard, however, to Beethoven and Michael Angelo, the idea of employing the one to explain the other, recurs in the writings of exceedingly able critics, such as Lübke and Hermann Grimm, and we may as well have a glance at it.

[To be continued.]

Birmingham Festival.

[Concluded from the Orchestra.]

The evening concert of Thursday was well attended, a great degree of interest being felt in the production of Ferdinand Hiller's cantata entitled "*Nala and Damayanti*." The high position held by the composer in Germany, and the strength of his reputation among our own musical men, many of whom are his personal friends, were sufficient to arouse this interest and to justify the curiosity to see how Dr. Hiller's work would be received in England.

[Here follows an analysis of the libretto, which we have already copied from another source.]

The musical working out of the above theme is as favorable a specimen of the German progressive school as could be obtained. It is marked by originality of idea, elaboration of effects, great capacity for contrasts, breadth of conception, and delicacy of workmanship. Occasionally the sentiment rises to intensity: nowhere is it common-place and nowhere are the parts contemptible for their ease. On the contrary, the cantata presents difficulties which it was the artists' victory to have overcome. Miss Wynne, Mr. Cummings, and Mr. Santley, who were the principal singers, did admirably. Miss Wynne, indeed, gained a wealth of commendation for the remarkable *entrain* with which she assailed her task. Her singing of *Damayanti* was exalted, impassioned, fine; and Dr. Hiller, who conducted the work, led her gratefully on to share with him the honors of his reception after the performance. Mr. Cummings and Mr. Santley also acquitted themselves to universal satisfaction. The applause greeting the composer was loud and prolonged.

The great feature of the Festival was reserved till Friday, when Mr. Benedict's new oratorio, "*Saint Peter*," was performed. To enter upon the claim which Mr. Benedict can put forth for consideration as a representative master-musician of the time would only be to recapitulate what everybody has accepted long ago, and from which no dissident could be found. By work carried on among us for many years he has gained a high and undisputed position. He carries the credentials of a pupilage under Weber; but his best credentials are his own activity. Chamber music, orchestral compositions, and operas of a high musicianly stamp have established his title; and these results of what may be called his home work—compositions of the study and chimney-corner—have been supplemented by indefatigable and interminable outdoor work: endless assistance at concerts and festivals and private gatherings, labor from which, were it high or low, pompous or homely, Benedict was never known to shrink, if only the appeal was made. Strange to say—though perhaps a reason may be found in his enormous and unrelenting occupation—Mr. Benedict had hitherto abstained from attempting the highest field—sacred composition. This he has reserved for his maturity. Four years ago he made his first essay in the sacred drama, and in the "*Legend of Saint Cecilia*" demonstrated perfect qualifications. Rendered confident by the reception of that work and the universal recognition it attained, he has now taken rank among the masters of oratorio by virtue of a really great work—"St. Peter."

The groundwork on which Mr. Benedict builds is not entirely dramatic. It is rather didactic, and does not thrust the hero prominently into the foreground. In fact, as Mendelssohn's aid, the difficulty in treating such a subject historically lies in the fact that Christ

occupies the central place in Peter's earlier life, and the Master would necessarily displace the disciple. The method in which Mr. Benedict has handled the subject is thus analyzed:

"The Divine Call; Galilean fishermen are preparing to rest from the labors of the day, when John the Baptist appears, urging them to 'Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.' After the forerunner comes the Master, who commands Peter to leave all and follow Him. Peter obeys, expressing his firm confidence in the goodness of the Lord, and departs amid the benedictions of his friends and neighbors.—Trial of Faith; The Saviour having sent His disciples to 'the other side,' retires to a mountain apart to pray. While thus engaged the storm rises and the little ship is in distress. Jesus appears walking on the waters, to the terror of his disciples, whom He speedily re-assures, bidding them not to fear. Peter obtains permission to leave the ship and go to Jesus; but his faith fails him, and 'beginning to sink,' he is sustained by the hand of his Lord. They reach the ship and immediately the storm ceases. A chorus of praise and thanksgiving then brings the first part to an end.—Denial: Peter declares his resolve to follow the Master at all hazards, but when Jesus is taken before the high priest the disciple is found 'afar off.' He enters the servants' hall of the high priest's palace, where a crowd of attendants are expressing their hatred of the 'Nazarene,' and Peter is three times charged with being a follower of Jesus. Three times he denies the accusation.—Repentance: The procession escorting Jesus to the Roman governor passes through the hall where Peter is, and the Lord turns and looks on His erring disciple. Touched to the heart, Peter repents 'with strong crying and tears,' the anguish of his soul being heightened by each successive scene of the great drama which then passes before him. He hears the lamentations of fellow-disciples, and the mournful song of his Lord's mother; he watches the procession to Calvary, and listens to the taunts of the Jews as they mingle with the wailing of the 'daughters of Jerusalem.' Weeping 'for all these things' and for himself, the hope of the Christian comes to his aid, and he is assured that death will be swallowed up in victory.—Deliverance: Peter lying in the dungeon where Herod had thrown him, is visited by angels, who assure him of Divine help, and release him from captivity. He acknowledges the goodness of God, fully relying upon which he expresses confidence as to his ultimate entrance into the everlasting kingdom of his Lord and Saviour. Rejoining his fellow-believers he is received with gladness, and a song of hope and joy forms the conclusion of the work."

The oratorio opens with an overture descriptive of evening by the Sea of Galilee—calm, placid, typical, with admirable orchestral undertones suggestive of the rippling of the waters. The first chorus, "They that go down to the sea in ships," opened by the basses, is a skillfully constructed and captivating *moderato* in six-eight time, and in the key of E flat. On the words "these behold the works of the Lord," both the key and the subject change, and a bolder strain, with simple chord accompaniment, is introduced. At the words "the Lord will preserve their going out," the chorus effectively changes its character, being sung only by sopranos and altos, and a further change in key and time takes place at the words "We will lie down in peace;" but the chorus concludes with the same motive which commenced it. A few chords for the wind instruments usher in the tenor voice, calling upon the people in the language of John the Baptist, to "repent, for the kingdom of Heaven is at hand." The chorus reply in agitated fashion, and the Baptist urges his mission with tremolo accompaniment. The tenor solo here, "O House of Jacob," was magnificently sung by Mr. Sims Reeves. The text, "He will teach us of His ways, for out of Zion shall go forth the Law and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem," is set to a very pleasing melody in triple time, in the key of G, commencing in *pianissimo*, and gradually increases in power and intensity, until the words are reached "For out of Zion shall go forth the law," delivered in detached phrases, intersected by bold *staccato* chords, when the original time is resumed, and the air ends *pianissimo*. A following chorus has some excellent four-part writing, contrasted with florid violin passages in the accompaniments. A chief gem of the work is that which follows, descriptive of the calling of Peter. It commences with a recitative, "And Jesus walking by the sea of Galilee," followed by a dignified baritone air in B flat, opening with sustained chords for the brass, "How great, O Lord," which is in its turn succeeded by a delightful chorus, "The Lord be a lamp," melodious and hymnal in character. Hereon follows the "Trial by Faith." The Evening Prayer at sea and rising of the storm comprise a highly effective scene. It opens *pianissimo* in the key of E, with short tranquil phrases for the violins *con sordini*

and in unison, then after some skilful modulations, gradually increases in breadth and power, with epical phrases for the flutes and oboes, suggestive of the rising wind, culminating finally in the grand chorus in 12 8 time, led by the basses, "The deep uttereth his voice and lifeth his hands on high," in the accompaniment of which the other resources of the orchestra are reinforced by drums and cymbals. The helplessness of the sailors at the mercy of the storm is graphically shown in this writing. The soprano air and chorus, "The Lord hath His way in the whirlwind," the soprano part admirably sung by Mdlle. Tietjens, has a grand and striking theme. It increased in intensity until the solo voice was heard soaring above band and chorus, producing a marvelous impression. Then a short contralto recitative, "And in the fourth watch of the night," introduces the scene of the apparition of Jesus walking on the waters, and the incident of the sinking of St. Peter. In this scene one of the most striking numbers is a dramatic and mystically colored chorus for male voices, "It is a spirit," opening with alternate phrases for the tenors and basses, in the key of C sharp minor. Peter's gratitude for his rescue is expressed in a baritone air in G minor, with *staccato* accompaniment, "Now know I that the Lord saveth His anointed," and a contralto recitative, introduced by a very charming prelude, but itself chiefly unaccompanied, announces in antique church tones the subsistence of the storm. A chorus, "O come let us sing unto the Lord," was encored on Friday; and the next chorus, "Praise ye the Lord," exhibiting Mr. Benedict's contrapuntal skill in the boldness of the harmonies, and the scholarly fugue, brings the first part to a successful conclusion.

The second part, comprising Denial, Repentance, and Deliverance, commences the illustration of the first section with Peter's assurance, confided to the baritone voice: "Though all men shall be offended," the music of which is wholly in keeping with the confident spirit. The comment on the above text follows in a chorus, "They all forsook him and fled," and we come to what is one of the highest successes of the work, a contralto air, "O thou afflicted and tossed by the tempest," sung by Mdlle. Patey; the effect was irresistibly touching and exquisite. The final denial of Christ follows, and the angelic rebuke: "How art thou fallen, O son of the morning," which is curiously out of character with the sentiment, for the music is absolutely joyous. The pathos, however, is supplied in the tenor, "The Lord is very pitiful," after the second and third denial of the Saviour; which Mr. Sims Reeves touchingly sang. Christ being led to the judgment-hall, the air which immediately follows is supposed to be sung by Peter, "Oh, that my head were waters." It is full of passionate anguish and contrite sorrow, and is the best baritone air in the oratorio. Omitting a gloomy chorus, a dead march, and we come to a double chorus for disciples and Jews, the great and original effect of which lies in a contrast of band accompaniment with organ, each illustrating the opposing sentiments of Hebrew persecution and Christian mourners. A soprano solo, "I mourn as a dove," is an exquisitely touching melody in A major, with flowing accompaniment, which, sung by Mdlle. Tietjens, was encored. The remaining effect lay in another pathetic tenor air, "Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me;" a grand eight-part chorus, in triple time, *allegro maestoso*, "He will swallow up death;" a stirring *bravura*, in E flat, for soprano, "Gird up thy loins and arise;" a chorus of angels, with harp accompaniment, "Fear thou not, for the Lord thy God will hold thy right hand;" another fine baritone air, of a jubilant character, "The Lord hath sent His angel, and delivered me;" and the grand final fugal chorus, "Sing unto the Lord, O ye saints of His," which, skilfully wrought, is a noble number and worthily concludes the oratorio. The verdict passed upon the work as a whole was unanimously flattering to its composer. On the conclusion, loud and long-continued cheering, accompanied by clapping of hands and waving of handkerchiefs, broke out in all parts of the Hall—the band and chorus joining in the demonstration. Mr. Benedict again and again bowed his acknowledgements, but it was some time before the public would allow him to escape their well-merited congratulations on the success of his really fine oratorio. For us it remains in chronicling the production of an able and conscientious musician to second the plaudits which on Friday were so freely bestowed.

After a short interval, Mozart's "Requiem" was proceeded with, the solo parts devolving on Mdlle. Irma di Murska, Mdlle. Drasdil, Mr. Vernon Rigby, and Signor Foli. The performance was worthy of the music. Band and chorus, under Costa's leading, were admirable, and the vocal principals were all in excellent voice, and sung with great spirit and precision.

The audience at the evening performance was quite equal in point of numbers to that of the morning. The concert was entirely given up to the execution of Handel's oratorio, "Samson," the solo parts of which were taken by Mdlle. Tietjens, Mdlle. Patey, Mr. Sims Reeves, Mr. Santley, Sig. Foli, and Mr. Cummings. The great successes of the evening were accomplished by Mr. Sims Reeves in "Total eclipse," by Mdlle. Patey in "Return, O God of Hosts," and by the chorus in "Fixed in his everlasting seat." This last chorus by the bye is stated by a Daily critic to have been utterly ruined by the slow time in which Sir Michael Costa took it. Sir Michael Costa's time, we take it, is Handel's time: so well known traditionally in the case in question that an octogenarian chorus-singer of the "London Concerts" and the smallest cathedral choir-boy would agree in the tempo. We should be glad to have the critic's view in metronomic formula, or perhaps at the next Festival he will undertake to conduct it.

The following figures show that, like Hereford, the Birmingham Festival this year in financial respects exhibits that law of decline on which we commented a week ago.

	1864.	1867	1870.			
RECEIPTS. £ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.			
Tuesday... 2135	2 4	2084	11 7	4530	8 0	
Wednesday... 2080	18 3	3058	12 5	1681	4 9	
Thursday... 4246	0 11	4301	5 0	2842	13 5	
Friday.... 3200	0 0	3226	0 8	3302	11 4	
	£12,562	1 6	£13,270	9 8	£12,356	17 6

From the above statement it will be seen that the receipts of the Festival of 1870 have fallen short both of those of 1867 and 1864.

Mr. Benedict's "St. Peter."

MR. CHORLEY, whilome musical critic of the London Athenaeum, writes as follows to the *Musical World*:

"During thirty-five years of rather busy life as a journalist, and attempting original composition, I have, on principle, avoided obtruding my own personality on the public. It is with no common reluctance, then, that, at the eleventh hour of my career, I feel myself obliged to state a case which concerns every literary man who writes for music.

I have always held that, in an oratorio, no intermixture of secular words with those from Holy Writ was in accordance with reverence or good taste. The two greatest works of the kind existing—the "Messiah" and "Israel in Egypt"—were constructed on this principle. I have never been able to comprehend how any one could venture to dilute or eke out the text of the Bible, or to acquiesce in the introduction of verses from the Psalter or Hymn Book into Scriptural stories, such as occurs in the oratorios of Sebastian Bach—unless, indeed, these be performed according to their author's intention, that is, with the audience joining in, congregationally. The admirers of Mendelssohn, who admit no fault in his judgment, will be displeased at my saying that the objection applies in yet fuller force to his "St. Paul"—because there no such assistance on the part of "the people" was contemplated. Be these wire-drawn scruples, or convictions worthy of consideration, I have acted on them whenever I have attempted to arrange a Biblical subject for music; as in the book of my friend Mr. H. Leslie's "Judith," and with greater care and pains, because on a more extended scale, when I treated the story of St. Peter.

This was the work to have been performed at the late Birmingham Festival; and my completed book, having been submitted to and accepted by the committee, was handed over to Mr. Benedict, who had been selected to compose the new oratorio for the year 1870, early in the last year. Mr. Benedict, both personally and in writing, expressed himself (to speak moderately) entirely satisfied with what was set before him; and thus not only to myself, but to other persons. It was further expressly agreed on, in terms of the most perfect amity, that no alterations or modifications of the text were to be made save by myself. It was subsequently suggested by me that, should time fall short, only the first two parts of the oratorio should be performed at this year's Festival.

The past year went on, and I heard not a word of the oratorio, which was to be delivered for rehearsal at Birmingham on the 1st of March, 1870. I returned to London permanently, after occasional absences (always within reach of recall), on the 16th of October, 1869. Becoming curious, not to say anxious, with regard to a work of extent and pretension, suggested by myself, and in which I had expended some research and contrivance, I wrote to Mr. Benedict, on the 15th of November, to inquire how matters were proceeding; announcing that I intended to be

absent from England for two months of the early spring of this year, and that I was anxious to leave nothing incomplete or requiring reconsideration. On the 10th of last January I learned, for the first time, that Mr. Benedict (who had answered my note) had shown portions of the music of "St. Peter" to more than one person, and that he had disposed of the oratorio to a publisher. In reply to my request for an explanation of conduct so strangely savoring of contempt to myself, I was favored, on the 15th of January, with direct information from Mr. Benedict, that he had thought fit to make changes, omissions, and additions in my book, which had been accepted by him unconditionally, and with regard to which he had not up to that time uttered a syllable of objection, or remonstrance. He informed me that he had made these alterations by aid of a concordance. While I distinctly refused, by the slightest connivance, to sanction so amazing a transaction, the full impertinence of which was, even then, unknown to me, my intention was to keep silence with regard to it. I felt that every possible deference was due to the committee of the Birmingham Festival, in recognition of their known services to art, and in gratitude for their private and liberal hospitality. But seeing that I received after communications on the subject from Mr. Benedict, not so much explanatory as aggressive, I have decided that it behoves me to lay the matter before the public; the more so, since I have only very recently learnt that Mr. Benedict had absolutely, before the oratorio was sold, thought proper to call in, not merely a "concordance," but the assistance of a gentleman who consented to accept the strange task of remodelling another man's productions. I have purposely foreborne speaking out till the present moment, not wishing to damage a new work by the statement of such a case of flagrant injustice and discourtesy; this, however, out of no consideration to the composer. To myself the affront is one of small consequence; I have written enough for musical purposes to give the public a fair impression of such power, greater or less, as I may possess. But the cause is the cause of all younger (and I hope better) men who may come after me, and to whom it may be of immediate importance that they should not be first enjoked and flattered, and subsequently ignored and insulted, by persons pretending to hold a place in the rank of artists. A. F. CHORLEY.

Ferdinand Hiller.

Ferdinand Hiller, pianist and composer, was born at Frankfort-on-the-Maine, on the 24th October, 1811, and is consequently, in his 59th year. While still a child, the great talent he exhibited for music already determined his vocation, and no pains were spared to perfect his musical education under Hoffmann, the imaginative composer of music, A. Schmidt, the great contrapuntist, Vollweiler, and subsequently Hummel, Mozart's favorite pupil, with whom young Hiller spent two years in Weimar. He was not ten years old when he made his first public appearance as a pianist, and in his 17th year he published at Vienna his first composition—a quartet for piano and strings. The subsequent fertility of the young composer is shown by the fact that the opus number of his new cantata, produced at the Birmingham Festival on Thursday evening, is 150. On the completion of his musical apprenticeship Ferdinand Hiller spent no less than seven years in Paris, where he devoted himself chiefly to classical music, and especially to the study of Bach and Beethoven. In the winter of 1836-37 returning to his native town he was appointed director of the Orchestra of the Frankfort Cecilia Verein. His next move was to Milan, where his successful opera of *Romilda* was produced. The winter of 1839-40 found him at Leipzig, where he produced his oratorio, *The Destruction of Jerusalem*, which deservedly ranks as one of his best and most successful works. Returning to Italy, he married there in the summer of 1841, since which time he has lived in turn at Dresden, Frankfort, and Leipsic, in which latter town he directed the famous Gewandhaus Concerts, in the winter of 1843-44. Dr. Hiller afterwards spent four years in Dresden, where he brought out his two operas, *Der Traum in der Christnacht* (*The Dream in the Night of the Nativity*), in 1844, and *Coradin der letzte Hohenstaufen* (*Coradin, the last Rose of the Hohenstaufen*), in 1847. In the same year he accepted the office of music director at Düsseldorf, where he remained three years, removing thence, in 1850, to Cologne, where he was invited to undertake the office of Capellmeister. Here, the already existing Concert Institute flourished greatly under his vigorous management, where, also, he founded the Rhenish Music School. In the year of 1851-2 he went to Paris, where he directed the Italian Opera. He passed the following spring in London, and returned in November of the same year to Cologne, where he has since constantly resided, with the excep-

tion of occasional journeys, of which the last was to Russia.

Of his numerous compositions, the most notable, besides those incidentally mentioned above, are his various collections of songs—especially the *drei Bücher neue Gesänge*—some pianoforte sonatas, two concertos for the same instrument, several excellent studies for the violin and piano, impromptus, rhythmical studies, an operetta without words, a *quatre mains*, and of vocal pieces for solo, chorus and orchestra, the "*Gesang den Geister über dem Wasser*" "Song of the spirits above the water") and "*O weint um sie*" ("Oh weep for her"), after Byron; "*The Night of the Nativity*," "*Heloise*," the *Loreley*, "*Night*," "*The morning of Palm Sunday*," the "93rd Psalm," and "*Whitsuntide*," may be cited as the most important. His great choral works are: *The Destruction of Jerusalem*, already mentioned in the oratorios, *Ver sacrum und Saul*, and the opera, *Die Katakomben* (*The Catacombs*). Among his instrumental compositions his Symphony in E flat is especially good.—*Musical World*.

A Musical Tour in North Germany.

BY DR. WILLIAM SPARK.—No. 2.

(From the London Choir.)

AFTER attending the opera and the concert in "Kroll's" Gardens, I paid brief visits to some of the minor theatres and higher class concert halls, which were all filled with large audiences, listening intently and with much evident enjoyment to the varied music performed by the excellent bands I always found in such places.

Professor Haupt was true to his appointment at 10 o'clock on Tuesday morning, July 5th, at the parish church, of which, with the exception of a single mutual friend, and the inevitable bellows-blowers, we were then the sole occupants. To my great surprise, this noted organist politely but firmly insisted upon my trying the qualities of the instrument before he himself displayed them. This unusual proceeding was afterwards explained to me as being his usual plan for testing a man, for finding that his time had been too often wasted upon men whose acquaintance with music and organs was very limited, and who generally mistook enthusiasm for knowledge, the Professor was compelled to adopt some scheme, whereby he might be enabled to judge of his visitors' musical capabilities. After complying with the request and playing for a short time, the rightful owner of the organist's seat took his place, and for one hour greatly delighted me with his performance on the instrument. The selection comprised Bach's grand Prelude and Fugue in B minor; Louis Thiele's air and elaborate variations in A flat; some variations of his own on a chorale; and a short improvisation. The salient features of his playing were more especially exhibited in the Fugue of Bach's, played as it was with remarkable dignity and grandeur of style—at a speed, too, considerably slower than that usually adopted by the majority of modern English organists. Never, indeed, much of Sebastian Bach's organ music as I have heard played by the most noted English organists, did I enjoy the music of the grand old Leipsic cantor so thoroughly; never did I hear this stupendous creation of his fertile brain developed with a more masterly appreciation of its varied beauties, subtle harmonies, and erudite phrasing. It was a treat to me of the highest order, and it will never leave my memory. The composition of Louis Thiele, a young Berlin organist and composer, who died in 1848, at the early age of 32, and whose compositions for the instrument are regarded, and it appears to me justly regarded, as the finest, withal the most difficult, organ music produced since the days of John Sebastian himself, afforded Professor Haupt a good opportunity of displaying his undoubted ability as a facile pedalist, the variations being replete with difficulties. To those who are desirous of getting some rather startling and novel original organ compositions, I would recommend the five or six works by this composer, which are published by Schlesinger, the well-known music and book-seller of Berlin, and edited by Professor Haupt.

The organ being deficient in nearly all modern mechanical appliances, in consequence of which variety of tone could only be obtained by changing the stops separately with the hands, the pauses between some of the variations were necessarily long and certainly not at all to the advantage of the effect of the composition, or the exposition of its continuity of thought and purpose.

The Professor having expressed a desire to hear some English organ music, of which he confessed he knew nothing whatever, I gratified his wish, and he seemed to be most particularly pleased with a Postlude in C major of Mr. Henry Smart's, which appeared in the first number of the *Organist's Quarterly*

Journal. When I explained the size, power, and character of the great organ in the Town Hall at Leeds, the facilities afforded to the performer by its superior mechanism, and, especially, the hydraulic engines, which work the bellows, thus dispensing with the three or four men on whom a German organist is still dependent, the warmest admiration was elicited from Professor Haupt, and a signification of his intention, notwithstanding his advanced age (he is sixty, but looks much younger) to make great efforts to come over to England and hear an organ of such magnitude and fine construction. Subsequently, in the course of a long and interesting conversation with this distinguished organist, he told me he had been informed that the leading public organists, in England were in the habit of playing overtures on an instrument which he deemed unfitted for the production of such a class of music. "Was it really so?" "Certainly," I replied, "for our modern organs in the large concert halls are constructed with a view to the performance of orchestral and chamber music; but in our churches the leading organists are especially particular in choosing the styles of composition suitable for the sacred place and the solemn service in which they are regarded." "I am glad," said the Professor, "to hear your explanation, as I had labored under the impression from what I had been told that you played overtures in your churches during or at the conclusion of divine service; but let me ask you," he added, "how and by whom are these public organ services that you speak of organized and carried on?"

"By the Municipal authorities in our large towns of Liverpool, Leeds, and Newcastle; the audiences have to pay a small sum for admission to the performances, which generally take place twice every week." This piece of news surprised my friend greatly, who eagerly remarked upon the peculiar difficulty which an organist must have in gratifying people of such diverse tastes, who moreover had to pay for what they heard, a fact which he seemed to think would tend to make them hypocritical. Upon asking how, if he had a similar object to accomplish, he would contrive to interest miscellaneous audiences when the organ repertoires of Bach, Handel, Mendelssohn, and other masters, were exhausted, he told me how he had been persuaded by the pastor of his Church, a proficient amateur, to give some performances of classical music; the first was attended by great numbers of people, many of whom loaded him with congratulations and praises for the success of his efforts; but at the second performance, when a small charge was made for admission by the direction of the pastor, who considered that the organist ought to receive some remuneration for the valuable time which he had been so willing to give up to the detriment of other pressing arrangements, there were not more than two dozen persons present.

This effectually put an end to all performances of a similar description, even at nominal prices, in Berlin, and afforded another instance, if any be required, of the impossibility of attracting large numbers of people even in musical Germany, by organ music unvaried by any other of a more popular character, though the price of admission is a mere trifle. After he had expressed his intention of sending an early contribution to the *Organist's Quarterly Journal*, I parted with this remarkable musician, as much impressed by his simple but earnest manner and conversation as I had been by his undoubted powers as an organist à première force.

On the afternoon of the same day I accompanied a friend to hear the usual weekly rehearsal of the members of the celebrated Berlin Singing Academy. It was a most interesting gathering of about eighty singers; there seemed to be about twenty-four sopranos, twenty altos (all females), sixteen tenors, and sixteen basses. They were conducted by Professor Grell, Herr Blummer presiding at the piano. The programme included:

Choral [from a Motet].....J. S. Bach.
"Sancta Maria".....Hellwig.
Motet, ending with Choral "Der Hirte Israel".....J. S. Bach.
Mass, "Lobgesang am Schöpfung's Morgen".....Reichardt.

The tone of the bass voices was remarkably good and sonorous, the lower notes even as low as double D being sung with perfect clearness of intonation; but the other sections did not appear to me to equal corresponding voices of well trained choirs in our own country. The discipline and order, however, of the whole affair cannot be too highly commended to the notice of similar societies at home. Members, as they entered the orchestra, first politely saluted the conductor, then the pianist, and quickly took their allotted seats, where their copies were found arranged in the order of practice. No talking or annoying noises were allowed in any part of the room during the performance of a piece, and the few of the audience who happened to arrive late exhibited that re-

spect, which all Germans seem to entertain, for the art, and showed their indisposition to mar the enjoyment of others by gently and cautiously moving on tip-toe as short a distance as possible. All the choir stood whilst singing, but whenever any part had several bars rest, those, whose voices were not needed sat down, and at a glance of the conductor's eye, who was always ready to give the signal, rose *en masse* with military precision just before the commencement of their part. This perhaps arises in some measure from their military education, for the humblest classes never pass each other in the street without salutes. Nor was the choir deficient in solo singers, some of whom sang at sight (as I was informed) the solos in Bach's Motet, and in the Mass, with remarkable correctness and considerable style and expression. It must be remembered, however, that each of these singers could play either the pianoforte or some other instrument, which they had studied from early youth; for it is an indispensable part of the education of both sexes in Germany; so they all become musicians and critics of more or less efficiency and excellence.

Before quitting the Prussian metropolis, I must just mention *en passant* that amongst the curiosities of the world-renowned "Royal Museum," with its magnificent frescoes representing the labors of Hercules and the exploits of Theseus, are preserved with the most religious care two flutes—one silver, the other wood—with which Frederick the Great was wont to divert himself when he wanted relaxation from the more serious cares of State. Whilst looking at these relics I could not help recalling to my memory the anecdotes told by Forkel of Sebastian Bach's visit to the great Prussian monarch in the company of his son William Friedemann. . . .

One of the largest of modern built organs in North Germany is that in the church of S. Thomas, Berlin, built by W. Sauer, of Frankfort on the Oder. The following "disposition" of this fine instrument will be regarded with interest by many:—

1. HAUPTWERK.

- | | |
|----------------------|---------------|
| 1. Principal, | 16 ft. |
| 2. Bordun, | 16 ft. |
| 3. Principal, | 8 ft. |
| 4. Gambe, | 8 ft. |
| 5. Flute harmonique, | 8 ft. |
| 6. Rohrflöte, | 8 ft. |
| 7. Octave, | 4 ft. |
| 8. Gemshorn, | 4 ft. |
| 9. Rauschquinte, | 2 2/3 & 2 ft. |
| 10. Terz, | 1 3/8 ft. |
| 11. Fagott, | 16 ft. |
| 12. Trompete, | 8 ft. |
| 13. Trompete, | 4 ft. |
| 14. Mixtur, | 2-5 fach. |
| 15. Cornett, | 3 fach, 8 ft. |

2. OBERWERK.

- | | |
|--|-----------|
| 16. Bordun, | 16 ft. |
| 17. Principal, | 8 ft. |
| 18. Sallicional, | 8 ft. |
| 19. Gedact, | 8 ft. |
| 20. Octave, | 4 ft. |
| 21. Flute octaviante, | 4 ft. |
| 22. Octave, | 2 ft. |
| 23. Nasard, | 2 2/3 ft. |
| 24. Trompete, | 8 ft. |
| 25. Clarinett, 8 ft. (durchschlagend). | |
| 26. Mixtur, | 3 fach. |

3. FERNWERK.

- | | |
|-----------------------|--------|
| 27. Quintaton, | 16 ft. |
| 28. Principal, | 8 ft. |
| 29. Gedact, | 8 ft. |
| 30. Viola d'amour, | 8 ft. |
| 31. Flute harmonique, | 8 ft. |
| 32. Voix céleste, | 8 ft. |
| 33. Flauto traverso, | 4 ft. |
| 34. Fugara, | 4 ft. |
| 35. Basson, | 16 ft. |
| 36. Oboe, | 8 ft. |

4. RUCKPOSITIV.

- | | |
|------------------|-------|
| 37. Principal, | 8 ft. |
| 38. Gedact, | 8 ft. |
| 39. Octave, | 4 ft. |
| 40. Gedactflöte, | 4 ft. |

5. PEDAL.

- | | |
|------------------|------------|
| 41. Violon, | 32 ft. |
| 42. Principal, | 16 ft. |
| 43. Violon, | 16 ft. |
| 44. Subbass, | 16 ft. |
| 45. Principal, | 8 ft. |
| 46. Violoncello, | 8 ft. |
| 47. Bassflöte, | 8 ft. |
| 48. Octave, | 4 ft. |
| 49. Nasard, | 10 2/3 ft. |
| 50. Posauone, | 16 ft. |
| 51. Trompete, | 8 ft. |
| 52. Clairon, | 4 ft. |

Dazu: 5 Koppeln, 4 Collectiv-Züge und 2 Crescendo-Tritte.

It was inaugurated on the 13th of January, 1870, by the present organist, with the following programme:

Fantasia J. S. Bach.
Choral-Vorspiel " "
Aria Haydn.
Adagio Mendelssohn.
Pastorale J. S. Bach.
Aria Handel.
Free Fantasia " "

(To be continued.)

Dwight's Journal of Music.

BOSTON, OCT. 8, 1870.

Theodore Thomas's Concerts.

On Tuesday evening (Oct. 4) the ways to our Music Hall were thronged again—after the summer drought and dearth of music—with people eager to be present at the opening of the promised fortnight's feast. It was the first great concert of a season which will abound in such. Mr. Thomas's noble orchestra were there in full force, nearly sixty instruments, and were warmly welcomed with their leader. There were some new faces among them, but the band had not lost its identity at all, the more important places being filled by the same men as before, except that the leading violin of last year had changed places with one of his colleagues, and that we missed Mr. Bergner in the row of 'cellists; admirable ones remained however, five of them, blending their rich tones into one. Also the capital oboist Mr. Eller, was supplemented by a new second of superior quality. Nothing of the old drill,—the perfect tune, the precision of time and accent, the sonorous, rich *ensemble*, the keen, searching, vital quality of violin tone, the marked and well attuned individuality of the other instruments, the sympathetic unity and spirit and fine light and shade of the whole rendering—was lost; it was the Thomas orchestra, unique and admirable. And with what zest one was prepared to drink in the sounds!

The programme was much better than the average during Thomas's last visit here. Of the four first and largest pieces three were classical and well known here, while the fourth was of the least extravagant and most poetic strains of Wagner, and fresh to all ears, though it had been played here many years since. These alone were matter enough for a rich concert; all that could have been further asked would be that one piece should be a Symphony. The lighter miscellany of the last part was simply light—for the most part graceful, sometimes sentimental—but never offensively noisy; even the trombone Concerto "roared as gently as any nightingale," and Meyerbeer with stunning *Fackeltanz* was not there to craze us. A better programme for Mr. Thomas's purpose, which is to conciliate the "classical taste" for which our city, rightly or wrongly, seems to have the credit, while making daily concerts profitable by catering miscellaneous to all comers,—could hardly have been devised. This purpose is not to be confounded with that of certain other series of concerts, permanently organized in most great cities, to insure opportunities, at stated intervals throughout the year or season, of keeping up acquaintance with the highest, purest kind of instrumental music, works of the great masters mainly, with only such more novel things as bind up fitly into the same bouquet or programme; for without such occasions the *Art idea* as such, would be lost, since Art knows nothing miscellaneous. With these two things: (1) a stated series of "Symphony Concerts" relying mainly on artistic principle and purity of programme, making their direct appeal always to a tried and loyal audience, which is certain by this means to grow continually in numbers; and (2) such feasts (almost surfeits) as Mr. Thomas several times has given us of ten or a dozen concerts in a fortnight, to quicken our ideal of orchestral execution, where performance does not lag behind conception (as has been and may yet be too long the case with our own local orchestras without the stimulus of such example)—as well as to give us glimpses into the newer fashions (so to speak) of music, and instances of splendid execution and effect in music mainly written for that purpose:—with these two things, Boston is certainly well provided in the matter of orchestral music. The former

is the normal education to fit us for a just appreciation of the latter; while, without the one, the other by the mingling of so much of the sensational and transitory with the true and the enduring, would mislead, confuse, prevent the uniformed taste from settling into any really artistic, sound direction.

Tuesday's concert opened with Weber's brilliant Overture to *Euryanthe*, so well known as an opening overture in many of our concerts before now. Nothing could be better to seize and captivate the sense at once; and the swift, searching chords of the beginning never seemed so full of life and fire as they did now, waked by this perfect orchestra, saluting us after so long abstinence. The sweet and mellow horn strain, full of feeling, into which that outburst of enthusiasm subsides; then the mysterious *pianissimo* with muted strings (the ghost scene of the opera); then the fagged passage, which seems fraught with earnest, half hushed conference upon some exciting matter; and finally the return of the heroic, fiery allegro,—all were listened to with breathless interest, till the enthusiasm could break out in loud applause.

In nothing did the sympathy and thorough discipline of the whole orchestra show itself more finely than in the accompaniment (not the right word to use in such a case, if only we had another) to Schumann's Concerto in A minor, of which Miss ANNA MEHLIG played the piano part,—admirably, of course, as she plays everything. The fine, poetic vitality with which the whole work is instinct, was sure to be felt with such an interpreter.

Next came the *Vorspiel* or Prelude to Wagner's "Lohengrin," which is a long breath of strangely mingled and mysterious harmony, one long crescendo from thin, aerial violin tones, shrilling at their highest height, through ever lower, broader, fuller harmonies, with richer coloring, to an immense *fortissimo*, as if the wonder, that first gleamed on the far horizon, had gradually approached the breathless spectator, widening, deepening as it spreads along, until it is now right upon him; then after a brief while it recedes again and ends in the aerial, high tones with which it began. This is Wagner's way of foreshadowing in a brief instrumental picture the supernatural arrival and departure of the Swan from over the sea bearing the Knight of the Holy Grail, on which the whole plot of his opera turns. One who knows the opera will feel it to be a very poetic and suggestive, as well as unique prelude. The crescendo, from the thin, piercing high sounds through descending, ever broader harmonies, is a true type in music of the idea of distance and increasing nearness. But that such experiments are dangerous is shown by the impressions got by persons unacquainted with the opera; witness the ingenious criticism in one of the newspapers the next morning, which tells us that "it begins with a long-drawn wail, or rather shriek, from the violins in the supremest reaches of their strings, in which the smallest bit of a queer little melody is dimly perceivable; this is reiterated and reiterated, until at length the stringed instruments slip down to their middle notes, and the tortured ear finds inexpressible refreshment in a few sweet, sonorous strains in which the wind instruments unite. Then after a brilliant and rather exciting *crescendo*, the customary barbaric work is done with quivering cymbals and frantic trombones, and finally the 'Vorspiel' goes back to its first love, and the violins scream out its conclusion."

To us this *Vorspiel* has as much poetry and beauty as anything we know in Wagner's music, but, instead of any "wail" or "shriek," or passion of any kind, it is all cold and clear as crystal, a purely intellectual fancy, so to speak. The picture could not have been presented to better advantage than by that orchestra,—unless in the theatre.—So brief a stay in the strange element one can endure, especially if he

can so soon find himself at home again in such a masterpiece of deep, significant, intense, soul-stirring music as Beethoven's Overture to *Egmont*; a masterpiece of dramatic foreshadowing in a more natural and human way; compact, concise, where "every note draws blood." This, too, was played with fire and precision; yet we have felt its power as much in other renderings.

Here ended the serious programme. The lighter miscellany began with a *Schlummer-lied* by one named Bürgel:—a very commonplace sort of go-to-sleep melody, wrought up by strange and far-fetched arts of instrumentation so that the sleep seemed feverish and haunted by not quite pleasant dreams. There was a fine chance, however, for the *pianissimo* effect, which so transports a public. A veritable Concerto for the trombone came next! Who would believe it? And who was not in terror at the thought of its loud length? But it proved very gentle. It was composed by the French, *Felicien David*, we are told, and has a regular Allegro theme, treated Sonata-like, not uninteresting, nor without a certain elegance; followed by a melancholy Adagio, of course, much in the vein of the stereotyped prison scene soliloquy of your modern Italian opera; then for a finale, a *da capo* of the first movement. Mr. LEERTSCH's playing of this elaborate and often rapid piece was something marvellous. The huge instrument seemed to have unlearned all its roughness, and to sing as smoothly, with a voice as mellow as a horn; only in tones more round and solid. The execution was in all points unimpeachable. Now and then the instrument would touch its lower depths, as if to show that it had not forgotten its identity, and give out the real, startling trombone blast.

A luscious set of waltzes, "*Königslieder*," and an exceedingly quaint and piquant "*Pizzicato Polka*" by Strauss, probably delighted more than any of the light music; and the Thomas Orchestra play such things almost to perfection. The lightest in the list appeared to us to be the Overture to "*Mignon*," by Ambroise Thomas. A medley of commonplaces such as one hears in any theatre between the acts; in the more sentimental parts suggesting Gounod; a sprinkling here and there of harp passages, of course, since the old harper could not be left out from Wilhelm Meister; but rather a preponderance of trivial dance music. How can such a hodge-podge be called an Overture!

The second Concert (Wednesday evening) had a singular programme:

Pastoral Symphony.....Beethoven.
Piano Concerto, No. 2, in A.....Liszt.
"Eine Faust Overture".....Wagner.
March of Pilgrims (in the "Harold" Symphony). Berlioz.
Komarinskaja.....Glinka.
Overture to "Genoëva".....Schumann.

It was a perfect treat to hear the "Pastorale" rendered with such delicacy, such fine outline, with the warm colors breathed so softly upon the canvas, and the whole picture, with its contrasts, so consistent and complete. With such choice, true instruments as Thomas has—especially the reeds and horns, so needful here—it could not have been otherwise. The little opening melodic phrase, with all of summer in it, stole in with gentlest pianissimo, and June was all about us. The "Brookside" musing and meandering ramble was exquisitely perfect. The heavy peasant's dance, the storm, were wrought up to a starting climax,—just enough of it—one difference between Beethoven and these moderns of the "storm and stress" school,—and all the thankfulness and peace and sunshine of the finale was brought fully home to us.

Now think of Liszt, Wagner, Berlioz, in close succession! And all in their stormiest and most gloomy vein. The Liszt Concerto had never been played in this country before. It is a most extraordinary work, exceptional, fantastical and puzzling as to any unity of plan; abounding in unique, now

wild now beautiful details; exceedingly difficult both for pianist and for orchestra; more like a long and fitful Orchestral Fantasia with florid, fitful pianoforte accompaniment, than a Concerto in the usual sense. First, aerial, mystical, fleeting snatches of strange harmony, sprinkled over orchestra and keyboard like showers upon the sea; then (in what order we can scarce remember) the most deep and dark and dismal of all funeral marches, with a great bell tolling in the bass of the piano; long spells of restless and self-torturing soliloquy; screaming climaxes, after the Wagner model; oft returning storms of a demonic Celtic fury; exquisite bright fancies, most original, but gone in a moment; moments of heroic temper; now and then of peace and sweetness, but still with something sinister and Mephistophelian peeping in,—and so on, to what purpose? But taking each detail singly, what rare beauties, what dazzling, strange effects there were! The magician seems to have got you in his deep rock cavern, and to throw down to you now this now that strange, glittering lump of ore or crystal, calling out: "Now what do you think of that?" For the pianist to execute the flashing fragments as they fell to her turn, required all the powers of a consummate virtuoso, such as Miss MEHLIG possesses in the highest degree that we have yet witnessed here; and in point of virtuosity this was thus far her crowning effort; the triumph was complete.

Of the rest we have not room now to say what we would; we shall return to this concert next time.

CARLO LEFRANC. The concert troupe organized by Mr. Biscaccianti in the name of this admired Tenor of the Italian Opera of last winter, gave concerts in the Music Hall last week on Friday evening and Saturday afternoon, and in the Boston Theatre on Sunday evening. What with stormy weather and the anticipation of greater things so soon to come, they were not well attended,—except the last. And indeed the day seems to have past here for these Italian *macaroni* programmes, made up mostly of the hacknied things from operas. LEFRANC revived the old enthusiasm by the splendid bursts of pure, sweet, ringing chest tone in the upper notes, especially the famous C in alt, and by his hearty, manly way of singing. In the Barcarole from *Masaniello*, in the great Duet and Trio from *Tell*, the air from *Il Trovatore*, from *I Lombardi*, &c., he lent a freshness and a certain thrill to the well-worn strains. To our mind the most even, chaste and finished of his renderings was that of the *Lombardi* air. In more exacting pieces his voice and execution are very unequal, lacking distinctness in passages of medium force and register. We fear he throws away what there is glorious in his voice too generously.

Sig. REINA is in some respects a splendid baritone, and won great applause in the *Tell* pieces, and the dashing song of *Figaro*, though the humor of the latter was not in the fine vein of Ferranti. Our old friend SUSINI is but the shadow of himself in voice. A fresh and pleasing figure in the concerts was Miss IDA ROSEBURG, very young apparently, with a pure, sweet, light soprano, flexible and true, who sang remarkably well some of the well-worn florid airs from such operas as *Linda* and *I Puritani*, besides one from *L'Africaine*.

Mr. CHARLES WERNER proved himself a sound, artistic, excellent violoncello player; his tone very firm, large and true; his style manly and expressive. And his choice of pieces was much to his credit. For instance, the Variations by Mendelssohn, in which he had the fine accompaniment of Mr. B. J. LANG; the "Romanesca" by Servais; and the Sonata by old Arcangelo Corelli, in which there was so much suggestive of Handel. These and more he rendered with true intelligence and feeling, free from all mere sentimentality. We hope that Mr. Werner will return to us.

EHLETT'S LETTERS ON MUSIC.—The translator of this interesting little book (Mrs. FANNY RAYMOND RITTER) has received a very complimentary letter from the author, who writes:

"On my return from a mountain tour, I found your admirable translation of my 'Letters' awaiting me. Your power of translating with such literal fidelity, and yet in so elegant a style, is astonishing to me. Thanks, too, for your Preface, which—if I except your flattering opinion of me—is entirely applicable to the subject, and the more impressive because written by a Lieder-singer *par excellence*, as I am informed you are. * * * It is not my intention to write a continuation of the 'Letters'; I am only an author during the leisure which my musical occupations permit; and no one can be sure of repeating any first success in a certain style, no matter how satisfactory this may have been."

PHILADELPHIA. The *Bulletin*, of Sept. 14, has the following account of the Handel and Haydn Society of that city:

Having brought out a large number of oratorios in this city, and always giving concerts celebrated for their thoroughness and perfection, they are also well known to our musical experts. The Society has recently removed from their old hall, at Eighth and Green streets, where they have been for many years, and have taken the hall formerly used by the Free German congregation, No. 445 North Fifth Street. The first meeting took place last evening, at their new hall, being the annual one of the stockholders, as well as the first held by the Society this season. From the annual report, which was presented, we glean the following facts: The stockholders number about eighty, and the officers consist of a board of fifteen, annually elected, who have control of all the interests of the Society. The membership numbers 162, the majority of whom are singers, and by whom the concerts, so justly celebrated, are given. In connection with the Society there is a very fine musical library, which is valued at \$5,000, and which is constantly being added to by purchases, the amount expended last year for this purpose being \$415 10. Three regular concerts were given during the season by the Society; on the 14th of December, 1869; February 8, 1870; April 19, 1870. Two extra concerts were also given, one of which was for the benefit of the Young Men's Christian Association, May 12, the last of the series taking place on the 31st of May. From the treasurer's report we learn that the receipts were \$3,338 33. The expenditures were also heavy, footing up \$3,048 61. The balance in the treasury is \$289 71, which was the amount of profits of last season. The first general rehearsal of the Society will take place on Tuesday next, the 20th instant, at which none but members will be admitted. After the reading of the reports, the annual election for officers to serve the ensuing year was gone into, and the following gentlemen were declared to be elected: President, R. T. White; Vice-Presidents, J. G. Umsted and J. Barton Smith; Treasurer, Edward Bains; Secretary, E. F. Stewart; Librarian, J. H. Pilley; Directors, William N. Freeland, J. G. Maree, William M. Abbey, O. W. Miller, William Foley, J. G. Whiteman, R. B. Yates, Joseph Monier, James S. Francis.

Mr. Chas. H. Jarvis announces his ninth series of musical soirées for the coming winter. They will be given in rooms No. 1128 Chesnut street, beginning Nov. 19th, and continuing on the evenings of Dec. 10th, June 21st, Feb. 18th, March 18th, and April 22d. Mr. Jarvis will be assisted by Mr. Wenzel Kopta, violin, and Mr. Rudolph Hennig, violoncello. The programmes which have been prepared are of a most attractive character. The following will be produced for the first time in public in this city.

Sonata—Piano and Violoncello, D minor.....Chopin.
Sonata—Piano and Violin, A major.....Raff.
Piano Solo—Soirées de Vienne après (Strauss)....Tausig.
Piano Solo—Invitation à la Daise, (Von Weber)
Transcribed by Tausig.
Piano Solo—Tocatta.....Domenico Scarlatti.
Piano Solo—Abendlied, (Schumann), transcribed by Raff.
Piano Solo—Rhapsodie Hongroise, No. 13.....Liszt.
Trio, No. 3—Piano, Violin and Cello, G minor, Op. 110.
Schumann.

The Beethoven Society announces that its first rehearsal of the present season will take place on Tuesday evening next, at No. 1128 Chestnut street. A grand concert will be given by the Society, under the direction of its conductor, Mr. Carl Wolfsohn, at the Academy of Music, on the evening of the centennial birthday of Beethoven, December 17. The programme will consist entirely of the compositions of the great master, and will be given in a style, as regards quality of orchestra and vocal material, never before approached in Philadelphia. The Society has been preparing for this event for nearly a year, and its officers and members firmly trust that their labors may result in such a performance as will reflect credit upon the musical taste and cultivation of our city, and also form a proper tribute to the memory of the great Beethoven.—*Ibid.*

The New Opera Bouffe—Herve's "Petit Faust."

(From the New York Tribune, Sept. 27.)

Mr. James Fisk, Jr., opened the Erie Opera House last night with the new opera-bouffe company over whose importation so many blows have been expended and so many cards inflicted upon the public. Probably few persons supposed that a style of amusement which was so unfortunate last year could be revived with any profit to the manager, and we are not at all sure that Mr. Fisk himself expected to derive any other benefit from his adventure than the enjoyment of lively occupation and the charms of agreeable society. A dense, struggling crowd, however, besieged the doors last night, and filled the theatre to an uncomfortable point of tightness. An unusually large proportion of the audience consisted of men, and in the upper gallery there seemed to be not a few who had anticipated in a part of the entertainment some sort of personal encounter between Mr. Fisk and Mr. Maretzek, and manifested by occasional hissing and other demonstrations a readiness to take part in any fighting with which the fates might favor them. Up to the time of our departure, however, there was no appearance of any actual disorder.

A conscientious critic is expected to bestow praise wherever he honestly can, and therefore we begin our remarks upon the performance by saying that the "Little Faust" is put upon the stage with that superb contempt for expense which characterizes most of the theatrical ventures of the Erie Railroad Company, and that it contains one or two scenes which are decidedly funny. It is a travesty upon Gounod's "Faust," both in the plot and the music, burlesquing the libretto, and stealing faint suggestions of the leading airs and musical situations. Thus a Soldiers' Chorus is introduced, and as the warriors file upon the stage, whispers of "the 9th Regiment" fly about the house, while Mr. Hitemans, who leads them in the character of *Valentin*, copies the commander of that gallant organization with an extravagant fidelity which we fear Col. Fisk in his stage-box did not fully appreciate. The duel with *Faust* and death of *Valentin* are also very comical. But here we must stop. As a whole, the opera is dull. The librettists, MM. Crémieux and Jaimé, knew no better way to turn the original into ridicule than to defile it with unmentionable jokes, and stuff it full of filthy conceits such as could enter into the head of no one but a Frenchman besotted with the poison of absinthe and the fumes of the Jardin Mabille. Fortunately, we are not yet educated to a taste for game of such very high flavor, and upon the greater part of the audience, foreign as it was in its general appearance, the fun fell very flat indeed. The music has hardly a redeeming quality. Not only is it worthless, but it is not even lively. It keeps just close enough to Gounod to suggest comparison and provoke impatience; we found in it not one happy conceit, not one air which tickles the popular ear, not a good chorus, and not an effective finale. After the second act (in the course of which there is a ballet of fearful length) hundreds of people, including a large minority of the women, left the theatre.

The troupe which makes its American debut in this very stupid work is inferior to the French companies imported in former years by Bateman and Grau, though it contains some good material. Mlle. Celine Montaland, (*Marguerite*), to whom the manager chiefly trusts his fortunes, is a handsome, sensuous woman, with a great deal of vivacity and a genius for vulgarity at which Tostée might stand

abashed. Of humor, apart from dirt, she showed no trace; but she seemed to afford a vast amount of pleasure to some of the men in the audience. Mlle. Lea Silly, the other prima-donna, was apparently content to exhibit her fine physical development in the accommodating garb of *Mephisto*. Whatever ability she may possess as an actress has yet to be shown. M. Gaussins (*Faust*) has an unpleasant nasal tenor, and a face which does not readily lend itself to dramatic expression. Not being naturally funny, he is always oppressed by his part, and the result is melancholy and at times exasperating. M. Hitemans, however, has real comic talent, and is the only funny person in the company, except a live skeleton-horse which is introduced with a fiacre. None of the troupe can sing.

We have used some pretty plain language in times past with reference to certain performances at the French Theatre, but we have no heart to speak of the "Petit Faust" in the terms which we think it deserves. We may say, however, that the credit belongs to Mr. Fisk of introducing a play more indecent and a prima-donna more revolting than any previously offered to the public of New York; and when we add that the nastiness is not relieved by anything pretty, or amusing, or witty, that it is not accompanied by even tolerably good music, that it stands out in fact in all its stark deformity, we have perhaps said all that the class of people who read our paper will care to hear.

TAKING IT SERIOUSLY. A correspondent, who modestly admits that he has no qualifications for being a musical critic save a good ear and a taste for music, writes amusingly to the London *Observer* that the uncouthly "Flying Dutchman" of Richard Wagner affected him so strangely that he thinks his impressions of it may be worthy of a record. He says: "The overture of the 'Dutchman' is representative of the legend. I endeavor to realize what it means. I get as far as waves in commotion, principally from the billow-like movements of Signor Arditi's *baton*; and after a time there is assuredly a violoncello that ought to go down below and call for the steward, while the cable or biggest string of a double-bass snaps with the stress put upon it by the storm of sound. The flutes do the wind in the cordage after the style of natural draughts through a key-hole in the month of March, and the thunder sets in upon the drum; and it strikes me that the entire brigade of musicians have general directions to make rain and darkness by letting their fingers run wild over the instruments. Curtain rises. Wailing in the orchestra. I have not the libretto before me, and I don't clearly remember the opening of the scene; but I never shall forget the appearance of the phantom ship and its crew. The former resembled a huge hearse, the latter were ghastly life-in-death objects which could only be produced under the inspiration of a lobster-salad supper. Music to correspond; music that suggested a dog howling on the door-step. . . . music compared to which the skirl, the yelp, and the nasal agony of the Scotch bagpipes, are sweet and considerate sounds. And now Mr. Santly appears. . . . He sings, and the dog howls, and the cat mews and bleats, and the Scotchman has it his own way in the 'orchestral accompaniment.' Signor Arditi (who should have worn black, instead of white gloves) is grave, the audience are profoundly grave, the muffled corpses of the Shillibeer Gondola gaze on the pit, as gorged ghouls might do after a midnight banquet. A lady in the stalls whispers to her friend, 'Isn't it nice?' I do not agree with her. At every new gush of Acherontic harmony, Stygian floods of noise from the orchestra, I am more and more cast down in spirits, until the sense of melancholy becomes maddening. If this emotion is a complimentary tribute to the music of the future, I have no hesitation in confessing it. For depressing the mind, for clouding the brain with melancholy, our own poet Dr. Young, of the 'Night Thoughts,' is justly celebrated. Accepting Richard Wagner as a genuine tone-poet, Young might, indeed, have been fit to write a libretto for him, but that mournful person could never bring the darkness and gloom of material mortality so close to us as the super-humanly lugubrious German. In another state of existence the music of the future might be intelligible, though I do not hope even then to be able to understand it, for reasons that occurred to me in connection with the boat-load of Hollanders who sank into a hole of smoke and fire at the close of the opera. The Flying Dutchman himself fled aloft, leaving his clothes to his crew, no doubt in order that they might remember him in the place they were bound for, and, as he departed, there was a sob from the band that rang in my ears as an incantation to blue devils for many days."—Altogether he seems to fail in appreciating the good qualities of Herr Wagner's music.

Special Notices.

DESCRIPTIVE LIST OF THE LATEST MUSIC,

Published by Oliver Ditson & Co.

Vocal, with Piano Accompaniment.

Angels ever bright and fair. 4. F to f. Handel. 35

This celebrated aria from "Theodora" has been revived with interest by the advent of Mlle. Nilsson.
Scene and Aria in Hamlet. 7. E to c sharp.

Thomas. 1.00

The "Mad Song" as sung by Nilsson with great *furor*. Both the above are adorned with a lithograph of the great singer.

O shall I ever meet them again? Song and Cho.

3. G to f sharp. Christie. 30

Words by Geo. Cooper.

"I dream of my home the far o'er the deep,
Still do I sigh each weary step I go,
As I think of my friends while sadly I weep,
As mem'ry recalls each heart that I know."

The Water Nymph. Song and dance. 3. F to

d. Toerge. 30

A good movement with pleasing harmony.

The Match Girl. 2. Eb to c flat. Maas. 30

"I'm a merry little girl, never minding snow or hail;
I'm in the lumber business only on a smaller scale."

This Little Pig went to Market. Song and Cho.

3. Bb to e flat. Smith. 30

"This little pig went to market one day,

Weary one do you remember,
When these few words drove all sorrow away,
Making bright May of December?"

Instrumental.

Consortien Waltz. 4. G. Op. 260. Strauss. 60

A new and not difficult waltz by this inexhaustible composer.

Slumber Song. 3. C. Bürgel. 30

A moderato in triple time with a graceful melody. Performed by the Thomas Orchestra.

The Watch on the Rhine. Transcription. 4.

F. Op. 88. Wels. 40

A brilliant transcription of the popular German war song.

Race for Life. Galop brilliant. 4. C. Op.

87. Wels. 60

A racy composition, introducing a pompose melody in F.

The Nilsson Waltz. 2. C. Turner. 30

The melody is mostly carried through with the right hand in octaves.

Les Cloches de Noce. (Wedding Bells). March.

4. C. Mrs. J. Thomas. 30

A characteristic march, introducing the air of "Thou, Thou, reign'st in this bosom."

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ABBREVIATIONS.—Degrees of difficulty are marked from 1 to 7. The key is marked with a capital letter, as C, B flat, &c. A small Roman letter marks the highest note, if on the staff, an italic letter the highest note, if above the staff.

